GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4020
ANSWERED ON:10.08.2016
Machine Readable Passports
Senthilnathan Shri PR.;Shanavas Shri M. I.

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether foreign governments may deny visa or entry to any person travelling with a non-machine readable passport;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of handwritten passports that need to be converted to machine readable passports;

(d) whether the Ministry had engaged any multimedia campaign to create awareness among citizens about this issue and if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any reports of inconvenience caused to any holder of handwritten passports till date has been reported; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) & (b) Yes. The foreign governments may deny visa or entry to any person travelling with a non-machine readable passport. The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) had set a deadline of the 24 November, 2015 for globally phasing out all non-Machine Readable Passports.

(c) Out of approximately 6.5 crore valid Indian passports in circulation as on date, about 2.0 lakhs passports are estimated to be non-Machine Readable Passports.

(d) The Ministry had issued Public Advisories/Circulars dated 9 December, 2013 and 23 December, 2014 on Passport Seva Portal, websites of the Ministry of External Affairs and Indians Missions/Posts abroad advising the Indian nationals to convert their non-Machine Readable Passports into Machine Readable Passports without any further delay. Indian Missions/Posts abroad were also advised to disseminate this information amongst Indian Associations in their jurisdiction.

(e) & (f) The Ministry has not come across any report of inconvenience caused to any holder of handwritten passports till date.